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221 657 the work of all available hands and are done with primitive implements. The harvest in, the farmer must deal with the tax collector and then ready his fields for the winter crops; in some parts of the East China Region, this may be winter wheat and rape; in others, two rice crops are produced in a single agricultural year. The rice farmer like the wheat farmer in the north, uses the winter to work on tools, handicrafts, and repairs, and the women of his family may carry forward their raising of silkworms and the spinning and weaving of silk. In other areas tea is an important supplement to rice agriculture, [5] and fishing is a full or part-time activity of about a quarter of a million people in Chekiang and Fukien. [6]

527 769 The farm year, toilsome in north and south alike, is punctuated by other activities and festivals which relieve some of the monotony of the long seasons of work. The first of the annual festivals after the New Year is that of Ch'ing-ming which corresponds in time to the Western Easter. Also like the Western Easter, it was once a Spring fertility festival. On this occasion the ties of the living and dead members of the family and clan are celebrated. Families often take picnics to the family or clan graveyard, make food offerings to the dead, sweep the graveyards, and then enjoy their feast. All relatives make special efforts to join in this annual celebration of family solidarity, and the outing is a pleasant relief from winter and indoor work. [7]

5. On agricultural year-cycle, see excellent description in Gerald Winfield, China, The Land and the People, New York 1948, pp. 34-61.

6. Cf. Geo. B. Cressey, Land of the 500 Million, New York, 1955, p. 127.

7. Wolfram Eberhard, Chinese Festivals, New York, 1942, pp. 113-127.

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On the fifth day of the fifth lunar month is the Dragon Boat Festival. This is of southern origin and is traced by Eberhard to the human sacrificial rites of the Tai aborigines of south China.[8] In modern times it has been somewhat less popular in the north than in the south. It is in the south that the dragon boat races were held on rivers and lakes. For most rural families the festival meant somewhat better food than sual and particularly the steamed rice dumplings known as tsung-tzu symbolic of the rice sacrifices made on this occasion to the shade of Ch'ü Yüan -- ancient stateman and poet of the feudal state of Ch'u.

On the fifteenth day of the seventh moon, usually in late August, is the feast of souls the primitive origin of which has been transmuted by Buddhist belief and symbolism. It is at once a festival for the souls of one's ancestors and a community salute to the dead. Ancestral graves are cleared, sacrifices of food are made, and paper replicas of desirable objects are burned. The salute to all the dead takes the form of floating paper boats with lanterns in them on some body of water. symbolizing the communities' concern that all the dead may be guided to the "other shore" -- Buddhist metaphor for salvation. Many pay visits to a nearby temple and pay for masses for the souls of the dead. particularly for the souls of the people in the community who died without descendants to commemorate their passing. In this festival, too, special food

8. Eberhard, op. cit., pp. 69-96.

527 769 is prepared for the dead and for the living, and the farmers and their families enjoy leisure and conviviality.[9]

The mid-autumn festival is primarily a moon festival and the ceremonies in honor of the moon carried out at moon-rise on this autumn night are full of the symbols of fertility and longevity. In modern times it has been mainly a festival of women, and the Old Man in the Moon is sacrificed to as the one who arranges all marriages on earth. The moon cakes in the shape of the full moon, are one of the special delicacies of this season. This too was perhaps originally a fertility festival, and in some areas it is a popular time to make pilgrimages to nearby mountains.[10]

These are the festivals that have continued to have the most significance for the Chinese farmer into modern times. Many of them have changed drastically through time, and we shall shortly see that the Chinese Communists are greatly altering the meaning and symbolism of those few which they have allowed to survive.

527 In addition to the annual festivals, the farmer's life of toil may be relieved by ceremonial family events. A wedding meant for those who could afford it a great feast and ample wine; even the poorest families made every effort to make a marriage ceremony festive. Practical jokes were

9. Eberhard op. cit., pp. 129-33.
10. Ibid., pp. 97-112.